



## WELFARE STRATEGY AND MEASURES IN TAMILNADU (2001-16) (DURING THE ERA OF ADMK GOVT.FOR WOMEN AND CHILDREN)

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### ABSTRACT

The ADMK government in Tamil Nadu, led by J. Jayalalitha, has launched a number of welfare schemes and pragmatic programmes aimed at the oppressed and depressed classes. She held the position of Chief Minister of Tamilnadu for around fifteen years, although in three different phases: from 1991 to 1996; from 2001 to 2006; and from 2011 to 2016. Those schemes, which were implemented during her reign during these three phases, merit a detailed discussion here. Some of them are ground breaking initiatives that have cemented their place in Tamilnadu's modern history. For instance, the cradle baby scheme; adoption of abandoned children; girl child protection scheme; welfare measures for women; integrated development scheme for women; women industrial co-operative societies and reservations for them, the schedule for providing job opportunities, and the formation an exclusive Commission for Women in Tamilnadu.

This apart, she has also aimed towards empowering women with equal opportunity, opening all women police stations wherever necessary, tailoring institute for tribal women and teacher training institute for poor women, Mahalir Mandrams, distribution of sewing machines for destitute women, Government assistance for widow remarriage, marriage of poor girls and pregnant women. This apart, establishing service homes, welfare measures for children, orphanages for orphan children, Nutritious meal programme and besides integrated child development services are some of them deserves appreciation. The Chief Minister Jayalalitha, Whose era of authority extended over three different phases like I phase : 1991-1996, 2nd phase 2001-2006 and third phase between 2011 and 2016 as stated earlier.

**KEYWORDS:** Welfare Scheme, Women, Children, Government

### INTRODUCTION

The ADMK government in Tamil Nadu, led by J. Jayalalitha, has launched a number of welfare schemes and pragmatic programmes aimed at the oppressed and depressed classes. She held the position of Chief Minister of Tamilnadu for around fifteen years, although in three different phases: from 1991 to 1996; from 2001 to 2006; and from 2011 to 2016. Those schemes, which were implemented during her reign during these three phases, merit a detailed discussion here. Some of them are ground breaking initiatives that have cemented their place in Tamilnadu's modern history. For instance, the cradle baby scheme; adoption of abandoned children; girl child protection scheme; welfare measures for women; integrated development scheme for women; women industrial co-operative societies and reservations for them, the schedule for providing job opportunities, and the formation an exclusive Commission for Women in Tamilnadu.

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children, Nutritious meal programme and besides integrated child development services are some of them deserves appreciation. The Chief Minister Jayalalitha, Whose era of authority extended over three different phases like I phase : 1991-1996, 2nd phase 2001-2006 and third phase between 2011 and 2016 as stated earlier.

#### **I phase : 1991-1996:**

During the 1991 Assembly elections, the AIADMK scored a landslide victory and was able to form the government. During her reign from 1991 to 1996, Chief Minister Jayalalitha undertook a number of programmes to fulfil her campaign promises. Some of its promises included harsh penalties for mistreatment and assault against women, as well as eve teasers. This apart, her government planned to implement a 50% reservation in all important areas for education and opportunities for employment. During this time period, activities aimed at improving the backward classes were given priority in policymaking and funding allocation.

From 1991 to 1996, the most important thing her government did was pass a law to protect for all depressed sections of the society. To this effect in 1993, the Tamilnadu Legislative Assembly introduced an Act regarding admissions to educational institutions and employment opportunities, which was approved during the 1993, Assembly session unanimously.

It may be recalled here that as early as 1927, Tamil Nadu, was the pioneer in granting reservations to the disadvantaged. A large percentage of the population in Tamilnadu has, for several decades, been subjected to the most unfavourable conditions and encountered difficulties due to the lack of exclusive reservations for social and educational benefits. However, due to the 1993 reservation policy, these disadvantaged classes were able to enhance their social standing and could reach the better standard of living.

#### **Sixty – Nine Per Cent Reservations:**

During the extraordinary session of Tamilnadu Assembly (9th November 1993) the then Chief Minister of Tamilnadu declared her intention in the assembly to accord 69% reservation for the benefit of all the communities which were in dire need of such support. The Tamilnadu State Assembly passed the resolution requesting the Government of India to make necessary constitutional amendments to ensure adequate reservation for the entry into Government services as well as securing admissions in educational institutions. Further the Tamilnadu Chief Minister also requested all other leaders of the political parties to extend support for this move for the new reservation policy and also to pass the resolution in this regard. On numerous occasions, the ADMK government advocated that all parties unite in order to fight for the backward classes' rights and advantages.

As a result, on November 26, 1993, the state government organized an all-party meeting to debate the quota issue in response to the Supreme Court's unfavourable ruling in order to consolidate and gain the support of all political parties in Tamil Nadu. Subsequently, the ADMK supremo worked to garner support from the then Congress government in the centre. Political experts say that Jayalalitha's win shows that she is the rightful leader of the Dravidian movement. **Welfare Measures for Children**

Women and children had high expectations of Ms. Jayalalitha. During her five-year tenure from 1991 to 1996, she introduced a variety of women's and children's welfare policies, garnering accolades from numerous state, national, and International sources.

#### **Cradle Baby Scheme:**

This practice is nothing but the killing of a newborn girl, with or without the mother's consent, immediately after delivery. In order to avoid future difficulties associated with parenting a female kid, parents resort to this form of infanticide. According to studies, female infanticide has gained societal approval since it relieves parents of so much of strain and several obnoxious social obligations. It is generally held, that due to inflated dowry demands by parents and eligible bridegrooms, as well as the incapacity of the bride's parents to pay these demands, the bride's party must incur substantial costs during the wedding, besides meeting all the heavy marriage expenses.

Occasionally, a family's yearning for a son leads them to sacrifice their daughter due to obvious reasons. The hidden slaughter of female offspring was not widespread among

all castes, but it was widespread among certain sections of the society. The murder of female children was carried out in numerous ways. In some locations, female infants were killed immediately after birth by stuffing their mouths with cow manure, giving them a little pill of poison, or not feeding them. This practise was then expanded to all the economically disadvantaged regions of Tamilnadu where female infanticide was prevalent and it has made headlines in 1986 and gain in 1992. Due to the continuation of this heinous social practice, the then chief minister of Tamilnadu took serious measures to combat this serious problem affecting the society.

#### **Adoption of Abandoned Children:**

In order to regulate the stipulation regarding the adoption of the abandoned children, a Government order was issued in the month of October, 1995. The order also has given clear direction while adoption of a minor child takes place to register such cases of adoption to the nearest police station. Alternatively, if a licensed organization that accepts children on remand is available, it can take custody of the kid, and take necessary steps to accommodate children through the procedure laid down by the Government.

Simultaneously, efforts were made through the Juvenile Welfare Board which will make the appropriate inquiries to locate the child's biological parents in order to secure legal custody. If they are unable to care for the child, the infant is considered abandoned and may be adopted by a new family. Since 1992, this Cradle Baby Scheme had an impact in Tamilnadu and as many as one hundred and thirty children in the Salem District have been cared for through the Cradle Baby Scheme. The Salem District's implementation of the Cradle Baby Scheme helped reduce the infant mortality problem considerably.

#### **New Scheme for Mother and Child:**

The Government of Tamilnadu devised and implemented a new scheme for the development of both the mother and the children with necessary financial assistance from UNICEF. Known as the fifteen point program this scheme was launched in November 11, 1993, by the Chief Minister of Tamilnadu, who expressed her desire to make Tamilnadu as the fore runner in implementing such kinds of welfare schemes meant for mother and children.

This programme has around fifteen points which are as follows: (a) increasing the weight of the infants. (b) The eradication of vaccine-preventable illnesses, including polio and neonatal retinues (c) Reducing infant mortality (d) Reduce the prevalence of severe and moderate child malnutrition (e) Eradication of micronutrient deficits, vitamin A deficiency, iodine insufficiency, and anaemia in children and their mothers ensure that every hospital and maternity care facility is child-friendly. (f) In order to free women from the constraints of early and frequent childbearing, the marriage age for girls should be raised to 21 years (g) Aside from that, universal primary education ensures that every child receives a minimum of five years of primary education through legislation and a campaign. (h) Increasing the Literacy and Status of Women (1) Improved access to sanitary facilities and safe drinking water in all children's centres (j) Stage Abolition of Child Labour (k)

Promotion of the Girl Child Protection Program (l) eradicating female infanticide (m) Detection and rehabilitation of childhood disabilities and (n) Open-heart surgery is free of charge.

### **Welfare Measures for Women:**

Numerous new programmes for the benefit of Tamil Nadu's women were announced as soon as the AIADMK government came into office in June 1991. Providing opportunities for equal chances for the women folk in the realm of education and employment was declared as the prime goal of the government of Tamilnadu. Also it is declared by the Government that it would put in place a number of programmes to help women and give them leadership roles in society. Further in consideration of the economic progress of the women in Tamilnadu, the government has announced the integration of all the welfare schemes. This scheme aimed to organize the women folk in the villages into various groups for whom training will be given for their self employment. According to reports, the Integrated Development Scheme for Women assisted 5,349 women in Salem District in 1992-1993 and 7,171 women in 1993-1994.

### **Women Industrial Co-operative Societies:**

The government of Tamil Nadu has implemented a number of programmes to assist women in achieving their social and economic empowerment. For their improvement, an innovative cooperative method was devised that secures their participation in the development process. An industrial co-operative society exclusively for women was established through to promote social development through self-help from among the socially disadvantaged sections of the society. To provide women with gainful employment, the government established industrial cooperative societies and 129 industrial cooperative associations were established which function under the supervision of the Commissioner of Social Welfare. These cooperative societies produce goods and offer services that are required for the Social welfare Department's various schemes to be implemented.

Select industrial cooperative groups participated in the production of uniforms which are distributed free of cost to the poor students of Tamil Nadu. During 1991 and 1992, the Women's Tailoring Industrial Society employed 20,000 Women. The government has developed an "Entrepreneurship Development Training Program" in order to incorporate women entrepreneurs into the state's industrialization. At a cost of Rs 10 lakh, the programme trained 800 female entrepreneurs across the state in 1992-93.

According to sources, 30% of industrial sheds in government-run states have been allotted to women. She also stated that more than one hundred women were trained in business during the ADMK's nine-month tenure.

### **Tamil Nadu State Commission for Women (1993):**

Some of the Congress Party MLA's placed before the floor of the assembly about the increasing crimes against women and the other downtrodden communities. Also they demanded the Chief Minister to pay adequate attention to all those issues affecting women of Tamilnadu. To eradicate and settle the evils committed against Tamil Nadu's women, a State Commission

for Women was announced in 1993. In order to protect the rights of the women, the Commission has taken necessary initiatives and implemented several programmes. The Commission provides advice to the government by analysing the existing laws, policies, and programmes for women and preserving women's interests and rights. Several programmes were implemented by the Government for this purpose which includes a gender sensitization training programme for police officers, judicial magistrates, revenue authorities, doctors and other categories.

Besides, the other programmes include a legal literacy training programme for college students and efforts were made to create awareness among rural women folk through necessary media. This programme further encompasses a one-day Dowry Death Inquest training programme for revenue divisional officers and subcollectors. All district social welfare officials have been appointed as dowager prohibition officers, and there are five non-official members on the dowager prohibition advisory Council.

On July 14, 1993, it was also reported that district-level committees had been established as branches of the state-level women's commission in order to receive and examine complaints of dowry harassment and any other offences against Women.

### **Women in Public Distribution Shops:**

This apart, as a response to the representation made by the members of the legislative assembly, regarding the provision for employment opportunities for women in ration shops. As a positive response the government has stated that given the prevalent melodies in the ration shops and the desire to effect revolutionary change, the government took notice of this plea to employ women in the ration shops. It is not enough, as suggested by the then-Food Minister, to have women on vigilance panels; the shop should be entirely staffed by women. Also it was advised that the women folk lend their support and join the public distribution system to make it a people's movement for this may be considered as a flagship programme of the Government. In addition, the government declared in the assembly its intention to open 5,000 female-led ration shops in rural areas. Further, the it is stated in the Tamilnadu State Assembly that majority of ration shop customers were women and hence the Government has desired to incorporate them in the department's activities.

### **All Women Police Stations:**

Since 1973, female police officers have worked in Tamil Nadu's law enforcement agencies. To begin with women police were hired to find and protect the female criminals in the police station. In 1975, eight female constables were appointed to limit smuggling through women at Meenambakkam Airport. Subsequently, female police officers were appointed in other cities such as Madurai, Coimbatore, and Trichy in 1976. Due to such moves, there were eight two sub- inspectors, sixty four Head Constables, sixty two Women Constables Grade and six hundred Women Constables in 1981.

When the AIADMK regained power in Tamil Nadu in 1991, the government was eager to implement police reforms to reduce dowry-related crimes and assaults on women. As a result, the AIADMK government decided to establish a dowry commission, to probe in to the dowry cases and crimes Committed against women.

To begin with a separate police station exclusively for women with a counselling centre was opened in Royapettah of Chennai, where dowry cases were registered and this was the first such centre to tackle these serious issues relating to women. For instance, all women police stations came to be established at different locations as early as June 1993. And in the next year two more such stations were opened.

Based on their performance the Government has decided to establish all women police station across the state in all the districts of Tamilnadu. As early as 1994, to tackle dowry related issues exclusive cells were created in the district headquarters, control by a police officer in the rank of deputy superintendent of police. In 1995, it has been noticed that all women's police stations has been established in twenty six additional locations. It is a unique step towards protecting the justice of women and Tamilnadu has been credited as the pioneer in this regard. In furtherance of these policies to protect the women folk, a new scheme was devised earmarking thirty percent reservation for the women police force effective from June 1995. Also a new uniform was designed which resembles a kind of push-coat style uniform meant for women police officers. The very functioning of the All Women Police station received much appreciation and the National Women commission openly acknowledged the efficiently working condition of the AWPS and their meticulous services rendered by the staff on duty.

## CONCLUSION

Despite heavy financial commitment and burden on the state budget of Tamilnadu, undoubtedly all these welfare measures and schemes, millions of beneficiaries, especially the downtrodden, the women folk and the children. Altogether the Tamilnadu has launched 18 populist schemes to its credit. In numerous humanitarian services are rendered either free of cost or with enormous subsidy. Despite its heavy burden on the state exchequers, considering the immense benefit these schemes delivered to the multitude of population deserves appreciation.

Several welfare programmes must have cost the state government a fortune, but they aided millions of residents, especially women. Jayalalithaa's welfare programmes are either completely free or heavily subsidised. She nearly single-handedly raised Tamil Nadu to a new level in terms of welfare programmes, allowing the state to be included in the United Nations' report. Tamil Nadu is the only state on that list, and it's all because of the Iron Lady.

To Conclude, that several social welfare programmes and community-oriented schemes were implemented to raise the socio-economic standards of Tamilnadu's underprivileged people during the tenure of J. Jayalalitha, the ADMK government's then Chief Minister of Tamilnadu. Some of her

plans were also carried out for economically disadvantaged sections of Tamil society.

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